

REMARKS

Claims 19, 20, 22, 23, and 30 remain in this application with claim 19 in independent form. Applicants thank Examiner Chang for the opportunity to interview the subject application in view of the Examiner's Answer dated April 5, 2005. As a result of the teleconference, it was agreed that amending the preamble to include "motor vehicle" would overcome the current rejection. Thus, Applicant has amended claim 19 and is submitting a Request for Continued Examination.

Claims 19, 20, 22, 23, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bauvois (United States Patent No. 5,288,442). Claim 19 has been amended to claim a *motor vehicle composite damping element*. Further, claim 19 recites that the composite damping element is received in a transverse link, a longitudinal link, a triangular link, a rear-axle subframe, a stabilizer, a spring-strut support, or a shock-absorber of *a motor vehicle*.

As discussed in the specification as originally filed, the composite damping element of the subject invention replaces composite elements based on metals and rubber, generally known as rubber-metal composites in such motor vehicle parts. Thus, it is appreciated that those of ordinary skill in the art recognize that the necessary structure to replace any such prior art rubber-metal composites is inherent in the composite damping element of the subject invention.

Illustrative examples of such motor vehicle composite damping elements are shown in Figures 1-3. In comparison, the prior art rubber-metal composite used in the shock-

absorber of the motor vehicle has the metal portion supported by a shaft within the shock-absorber and the rubber portion positioned to absorb and dampen vibrations received by the shock-absorber. The subject invention replaces the prior art rubber-metal composite with the thermoplastic polyurethane molding (i) supported by the shaft within the shock-absorber and the microcellular polyurethane elastomer layer (ii) positioned to absorb and dampen vibrations received by the shock-absorber. These prior art rubber-metal composites have disadvantages that include high density of the metal constituents, short service life of the rubber, and loss of adhesion between the rigid metal and the flexible rubber (*see page 1, lines 20-34 of the originally filed specification*). The subject invention overcomes these disadvantages.

As previously submitted, Applicants are not claiming to be the first to invent thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) moldings or microcellular polyurethane elastomers, individually. Both TPU molding and microcellular polyurethane elastomers are known individually and have been used in various applications. However, Applicants are claiming to have been the first to combine these into the motor vehicle composite damping element to dampen and absorb vibrations in the transverse link, the longitudinal link, the triangular link, the rear-axle subframe, the stabilizer, the spring-strut support, or the shock-absorber in motor vehicle construction (*see page 9, lines 4-9 of the originally filed specification.*)

Alternatively, Bauvois is traditionally meant to be a complex molded structure comprising stiffening or reinforcing elements, wherein the stiffening or reinforcing elements may comprise a damping element. The subject invention comprises two layers, the thermoplastic polyurethane molding (i) and the microcellular polyurethane elastomer layer


(ii). The subject invention does not include additional stiffening or reinforcing elements as taught by Bauvois, nor would one skilled in the art desire such elements to replace the rubber-metal composites.

As a result of the teleconference with Examiner Chang, it is believed that these amendments overcome the §103(a) rejection and claim 19 is allowable. Claims 20, 22, 23, and 30, which depend directly or indirectly from claim 19, are also believed to be allowable.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Application, as amended, is now presented in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. Applicant submits a check for the required fees, however, if any other or additional fees become required, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account 08-2789.

Respectfully submitted
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